

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. B-4389

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name

(indicate preferred name)

historic

215 West Saratoga Street

and/or common

Baltimore Travel Center

2. Location

street & number

215 W. Saratoga Street

☐ not for publication

city, town

Baltimore

☐ vicinity of

congressional district

Seventh

state

Maryland

county

Baltimore

3. Classification

Category

☒ district
☒ building(s)
☐ structure
☐ site
☐ object

Ownership

☒ public
☐ private
☐ both
Public Acquisition
☐ in process
☐ being considered
☒ not applicable

Status

☐ occupied
☐ unoccupied
☐ work in progress
Accessible
☒ yes: restricted
☐ yes: unrestricted
☐ no

Present Use

☒ agriculture
☐ commercial
☐ educational
☐ entertainment
☐ government
☐ industrial
☐ military
☐ museum
☐ park
☐ private residence
☐ religious
☐ scientific
☐ transportation
☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

(give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name

Agnes L. Frenkil

street & number

4000 N. Charles Street, Apt. 702

telephone no.:

city, town

Baltimore

state and zip code

MD 21201

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.

Baltimore City Courthouse

liber

street & number

100 N. Calvert Street, Room 610

folio

city, town

Baltimore

state

MD

6. Representation in Existing

Historical Surveys

title

date

☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Survey No. B-4389

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

Check one

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed
☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Resource Count: 1

This circa 1875 shed-roofed commercial building faces north on W. Saratoga Street and abuts two partywall buildings. It is part of a large brick commercial block. This section, defined by seams in the brick work and fenestration has a street frontage of 22' and a depth of 120'. The brick is painted grey and the trim is black.

The first story has been altered circa 1940-1950. It is remodelled into an angled, glazed wall with display windows. To the far east of the facade are two angled doors set in a recessed vestibule. The first door leads to the upstairs of the building to the east. The second door has a fixed transom and leads to the commercial store front. The display windows are large plates of glass. There is a solid door marked 215 1/2 at the far west edge. The wall surface and window foundation are covered with fluted aluminum siding.

The second story contains a central tripartite window. Narrow sidelights flank a double-width central plate. All the windows are large sheets of plate glass. A row of four hinged transoms runs above the windows. The lintel has a profile of fillet, ogee, two fillets, and back band. Jig-sawn corner blocks are placed underneath the extended lintel.

The third story has three 1/1 sash windows with stone sills and brick splayed jack arches.

The projecting cornice has a profile of fillet, ogee, bead, and back band. Large brackets terminate each end. There are ghostlines of absent modillions under the soffit. The back band below this has a row of miniature scrolled brackets. The large end brackets have long drops. A raised stringcourse runs between the drops.

The first door in the far east bay opens onto a stair hall that has board wainscoting. The stairs rise along the east wall to a second story landing off to the west. The stairs continue to rise along the east wall till they reach the south wall where they turn and continue up to the upper stories. The interior of the store is finished with wallboard and a suspended acoustic tile ceiling.

8. Significance

Survey No. B-4389

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____ unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This three-bay, three-story building is a good example of speculative commercial block construction along Saratoga Street during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. It is part of a series of partywall structures with similar cornices and massing, but the units are separated by a brick seam indicating separate stages of construction, and there are separate entrances and separate alterations to each of the row buildings.

The building's style and massing are representative of the late nineteenth-century rowhouses and partywall structures on the block. Architectural historian Richard Longstreth writes, "the gradual abandonment of the shop-house as the dominant form of commercial architecture was due to the ever-increasing demands for trade and professional services along with a corresponding increase in land values, all of which fostered the design of buildings used entirely for commercial purposes."¹ In this case, the commercial solution was to retain the basic shop-house form but create a commercial second-story reading. The tripartite window in the second story, complete with its millwork lintel and corner brackets, is an early Victorian experiment in commercial architecture. The large expanse of glass and cornice-like lintel invoked the nineteenth-century street-level shopfront and could be used as display windows for the second-story merchant's wares. While the overall shell of the building retains its nineteenth-century shop-house form, the tripartite window shows an attempt to make a commercial statement from a residential building type. Before there was a clear definition of a commercial building type there was this early, experimental form. The third story, in fact, could have still been used as dwelling quarters.

A few elements of Victorian fashion are still visible in the cornice (which is identical to several within the row). The cornice's modestly overhanging eaves are supported by small modillion brackets (now missing) and a dentil course below, a common way of decoratively capping the top of a building.

¹ Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street, pp. 24, 29.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No.

B-4389

Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street (Washington: Preservation Press, 1987).

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Baltimore East Quad

Quadrangle scale

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Diane Shaw, Architectural Historian

organization CHAP, Room 1037

date December 20, 1991

street & number 417 E. Fayette Street

telephone 301-396-4866

city or town Baltimore

state MD

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
301-514-7600

B-4389
215 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD
Section 8 Significance
8.1

The two entrances (one for the first story and one for the upper stories serving both this building and its neighbor to the east) are handled in an unusual manner. Both entrances are part of the building proper, even though the two units are otherwise quite separate, as evident in the brick seam and different cornice. (Although the second-story tripartite windows have the same characteristics.) The presence of two entrances indicates that the building was constructed to hold more than one tenant, and that separate entrances were desirable.

The alterations to the first story indicate that the commercial needs and aesthetics changed over the century. The angled facade running towards a recessed entrance was popular during the post-World War Two period: the recessed entrance permitted additional display areas along the vestibule wall and the slant of the facade wall "drew" the sidewalk traffic in. The fluted aluminum siding was also a popular veneer at the time.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Geographic Organization:
Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period:

Urban/Industrial Dominance, 1870-1930
Modern Period, 1930-present, alterations

Historic Period Themes:
Architecture
Economics

Resource Type:
Building

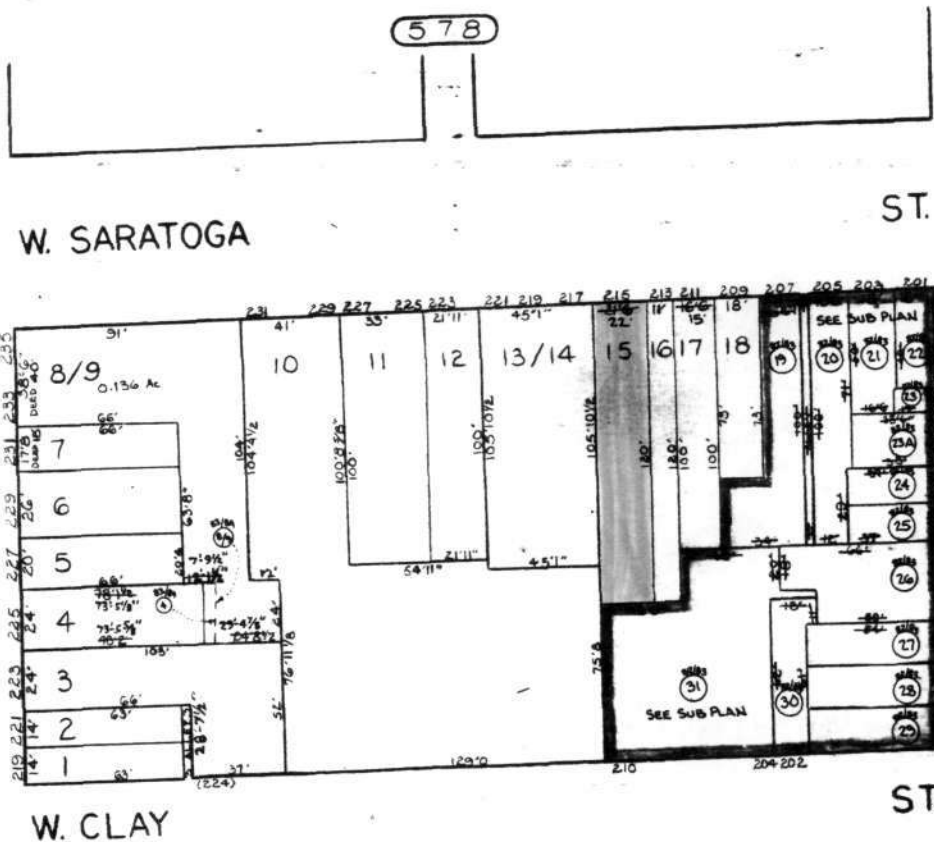
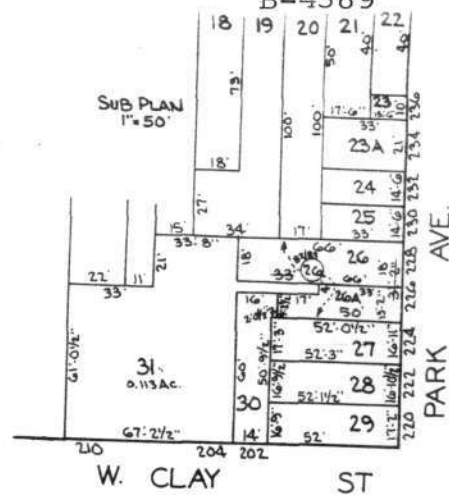
Historic Environment:
Urban

Historic Function and Use:

Commercial

Known Design Source:
None

B-4389



NOTICE

THIS IS A REAL PROPERTY PLAT AS PROVIDED FOR UNDER ARTICLE 76(d) OF THE CITY CHARTER IT IS COMPILED FROM TITLE AND OTHER SOURCES AND IS NOT AN AUTHENTIC SURVEY.

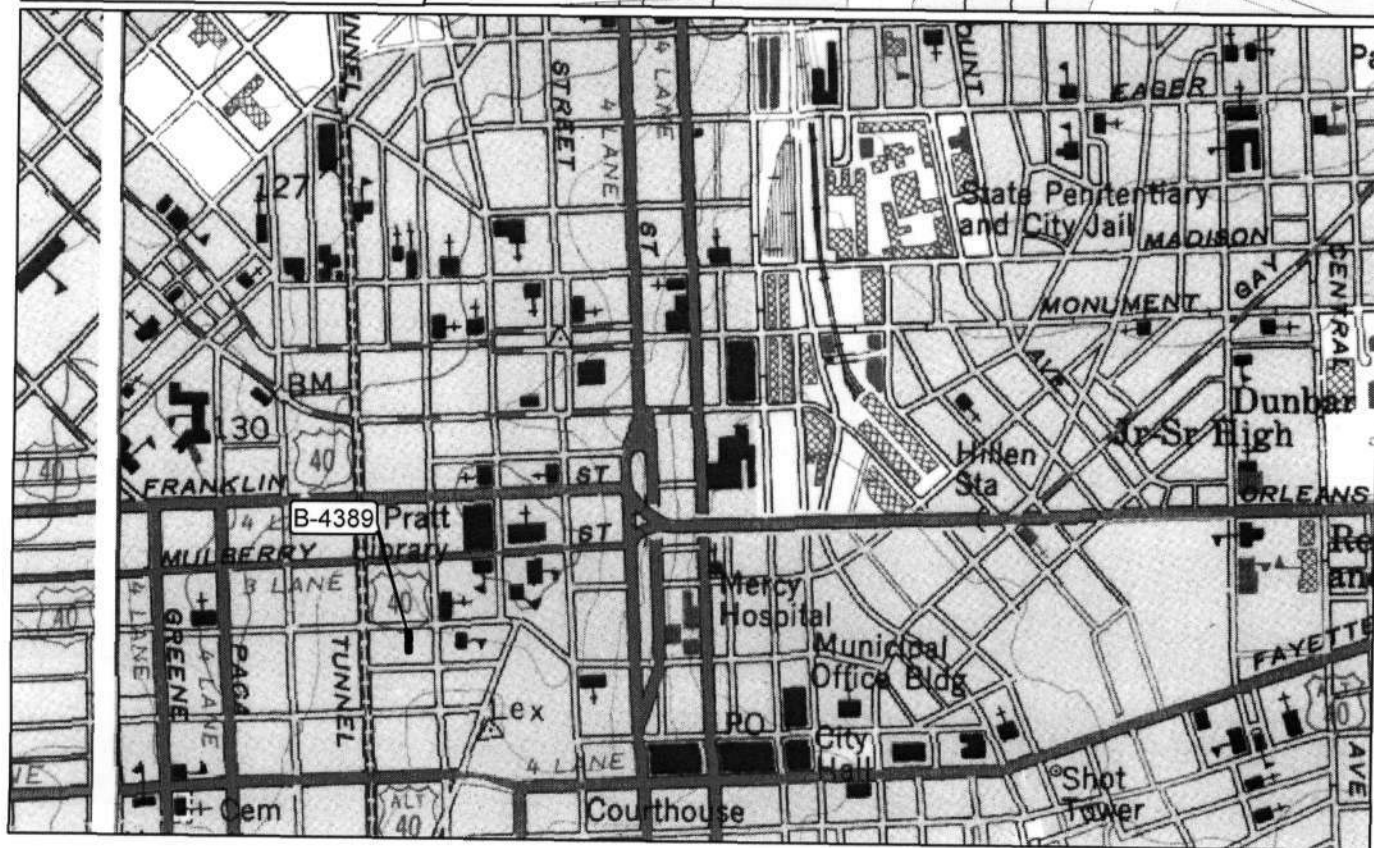
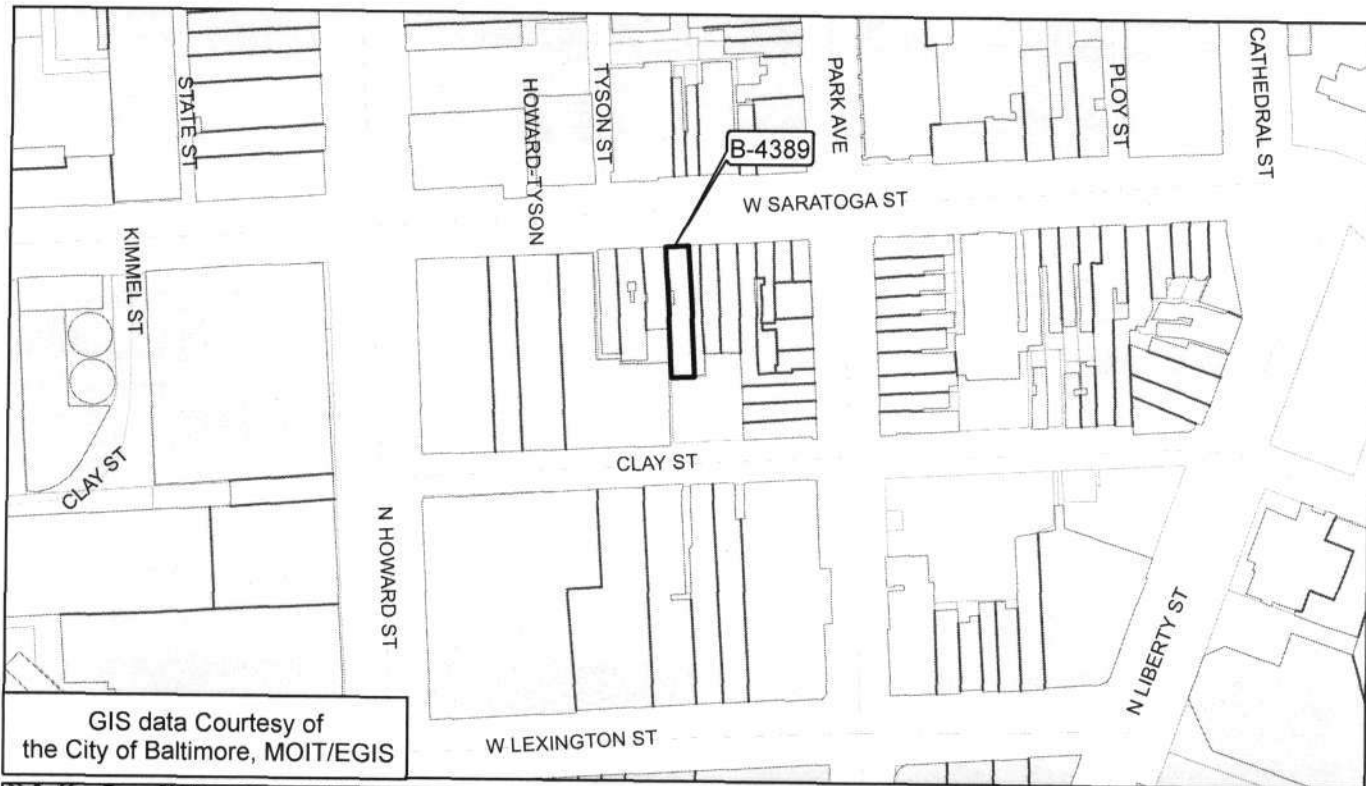
CITY OF BALTIMORE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

PROPERTY LOCATION DIVISION

WARD 4 SECTION 10
BLOCK 597

SCALE 1" = 50' DATE NOV. 1966

B-4389
Baltimore Travel Center
215 W. Saratoga Street
Block 0597, Lot 015
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.





B-4389

215 W. Saratoga St.

Baltimore MD

Diane Shaw

8/91

Maryland SHPO

Facade, north elevation

1/1